



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EARLY NOMINATION DEADLINE FOR 2017 TRIPLE CROWN SERIES
IS SATURDAY, JAN. 14**

Owners, Trainers Can Nominate Candidates Online at www.TheTripleCrown.com

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Thursday, Jan. 12, 2017) – Owners and trainers of promising 3-year-old Thoroughbreds pointing toward the **2017 Triple Crown** races have only a few days remaining to make their horses eligible for those races during the early nomination phase for the historic series that includes the **\$2 million Kentucky Derby Presented by Yum! Brands** (Grade I), the **\$1.5 million Preakness** (GI) and the **\$1.5 million Belmont Stakes** (GI).

The early deadline for online, telephone or faxed nominations to the 2017 Triple Crown is **11:59 p.m. (all times Eastern) on Saturday, Jan. 14**. Each nomination **must be accompanied by payment of a fee of \$600** to make the individual Thoroughbred eligible to compete in any or all of Triple Crown contests.

A late nomination period, which requires the payment of \$6,000 for each nominated 3-year-old, will open at 12 a.m. on Sunday, Jan. 15 and continues through Monday, March 20.

The 2017 Triple Crown series opens on Saturday, May 6 with the 143rd running of the 1 ¼-mile Kentucky Derby at **Churchill Downs** in Louisville, Ky. The 142nd Preakness, the 1 3/16-mile second jewel, is set for Saturday, May 20 at **Pimlico Race Course** in Baltimore, Md. The 149th running of the Belmont Stakes, its 1 ½-mile final leg, is scheduled for Saturday, June 10 at **Belmont Park** in Elmont, N.Y.

Each race in the 2017 Triple Crown produced a different winner when **Reddam Racing LLC's** then-unbeaten **Nyquist** won the Kentucky Derby; **Big Chief Racing LLC, Head of Plains Partners LLC, Rocket O Ranch LLC et al.'s Exaggerator** took the Preakness and **WinStar Farm LLC and Bobby Flay's Creator** completed the series with a dramatic triumph in the Belmont Stakes.

Just a year earlier **Zayat Stables' homebred American Pharoah**, trained by **Bob Baffert** and ridden by **Victor Espinoza**, became only the 12th 3-year-old, and the first since **Affirmed** in 1978, to sweep the American Triple Crown series. The 37-year gap between American Pharoah's 2015 Triple Crown and the previous sweep by Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame member **Affirmed** was the longest in the history of the series that dates to 1919, when **Sir Barton** became the first Thoroughbred to win all three classic races.

All Triple Crown nominations made by traditional mail during the early phase must be postmarked by the Jan. 14 closing date. **Nominations can easily be made online at www.TheTripleCrown.com**, by telephone with a designated representative from one of the three Triple Crown host tracks or via fax. **Online, telephone and fax nominations must be completed prior to the 11:59 p.m. deadline on Jan. 14.**

Early Nomination Deadline for 2017 Triple Crown Series is Saturday, Jan. 14
Thursday, Jan. 12, 2017
Page 2 of 2

Last year's early phase of Triple Crown early nominations phase attracted 368 horses. An additional nine Thoroughbreds were made eligible during the late nomination period to raise the overall 2016 nomination total to 377.

The Kentucky Derby field has been limited to 20 starters since 1975 and the horses that enter the starting gate for its 2016 renewal will again be determined by points earned in the **"Road to the Kentucky Derby"** eligibility system, which debuted in 2013. If entries to the Derby total more than the maximum field of 20, up to four "also eligible" entrants will be permitted. If one or more entrants scratch from the 20-horse Kentucky Derby field prior to 9 a.m. Friday, May 5, the also-eligible horse or horses with highest preference in the "Road to the Kentucky Derby" system assume the empty stalls in the starting gate.

The Preakness is limited to 14 starters, while the Belmont Stakes permits a maximum field of 16 horses.

Three-year-olds that were not nominated to the Triple Crown during either the early or late nomination phases have a final opportunity to become eligible for the races through payment of a **supplemental nomination fee**. Due at the time of entry for either the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness or the Belmont Stakes, the supplemental fee process makes a horse eligible for the remainder of the Triple Crown series. A supplemental nomination at the time of entry to the Kentucky Derby requires payment of \$200,000. The fee is \$150,000 if paid prior to the Preakness or \$75,000 at time of entry to the Belmont Stakes.

Churchill Downs adjusted its entry process in 2014 to permit horses that are made supplemental nominations prior to the Kentucky Derby to be treated the same as original nominees. If one or more supplemental nominees possess sufficient "Road to the Kentucky Derby" points to qualify for the Derby field, they will be allowed to start over original nominees that possess lesser qualifications. Under its previous policy, Churchill Downs gave preference in all cases to early and late Triple Crown nominees.

The 12 winners of the Triple Crown are **Sir Barton** (1919), **Gallant Fox** (1930), **Omaha** (1935), **War Admiral** (1937), **Whirlaway** (1941), **Count Fleet** (1943), **Assault** (1946), **Citation** (1948), **Secretariat** (1973), **Seattle Slew** (1977), **Affirmed** (1978) and **American Pharoah** (2015).

Information on the Triple Crown nomination process – including a link to a print-and-mail nomination form – is available at www.theTripleCrown.com.

Representatives of the Triple Crown host tracks include:

- **Churchill Downs:** Racing Secretary **Ben Huffman** at (502) 638-3820 or Ben.Huffman@KyDerby.com ... **Kelly Danner** at (502) 638-3825 or Kelly.Danner@KyDerby.com ... Fax: (502) 638-3915;
- **Pimlico:** Director of Racing/Racing Secretary **Georganne Hale** at (800) 638-1859 or ghale@marylandracing.com ... Stakes Coordinator **Coleman Blind** at the same number or via email at cblind@marylandracing.com;
- **Belmont Park:** Senior Vice President of Racing Operations **Martin Panza** at (718) 659-4241 or mpanza@nyrainc.com ... Stakes Coordinator **Andrew Byrnes** at same number or abyrnes@nyrainc.com ... Fax: (718) 659-3581.

-END-